

Oakhaven Montessori School

Family Handbook

Welcome!

It is our mission to provide a safe, nurturing and diversely enriching experience for you and your family.

We follow the Montessori Approach in all areas of our operation to help children fully realize their potential.

We encourage family values and participation to provide the best environment to follow your child's developmental cycles and build a strong foundation for life.

Admission Policy: Families from all nationalities, religions, races and cultures are welcome.

Ages:

- 2 - 3 year olds for Mom/Dad and Tots. (We accept children in the process of toilet training, there is a diapering fee. See Diapers below.)
- 2.25 - 5 for pre school.
- 4.5 - 5 year olds for TK, PreK.
- 5 - 6 year olds for kindergarten.
- 6- 12 year olds for home school enrichment, special classes, seasonal camps and after care.

Arrival and Departure: To foster independence, allow your child to carry in their gear and walk alone. The door will be opened at 8:30 a.m. Sign in and out at the sign in counter, noting the actual time of arrival and departure. Please arrive by 9:00 am.

Children do best when they get a short goodbye. Assure them that _____ will pick them up. If someone other than the normally scheduled person is to pick up be sure to tell your child AND US!

If your child cries, give one kiss, one hug AND LEAVE! Let us know if you need help. When you are confident that your child is safe your child will feel safe too. Feel free to call later to find out how things are going. We will call if there is anything you should know.

Departure is promptly at 12:00 and 2:30 and 4:30 pm during the school year and 5:30 pm during summer camp. Please allow enough time to read group notes and other announcements and be ready to go by departure time. Late pick up results in a \$1 per minute fee added to the following month's tuition.

If someone not previously authorized is picking up your child, we must have a written and signed note or a phone call to release your child. ID will be required of any person picking your child up for the first time.

Art, Hand and Paperwork: Hand work will be sent home every so often. Some will be kept for gift giving.

Do not ask your child to make something for you! Allow your child to create his/her own experience.

Limit your comments to nonjudgmental remarks "I see a lot of red." "It looks like you put a lot of work into this."

For a young child, art work is an emotional expression with the focus on the process, not the end product.

Attendance: Regular attendance and punctual arrival and departure is essential to benefit from the program.

Birthdays: Treats are welcome! A small cookie or mini muffin is ideal. Also send in a regular snack consisting of a protein, vegetable or fruit and a grain.

Plan to attend your child's birthday ceremony. It is short and sweet. Extended family and adult friends are welcome. Clear children guests with Tulum.

At the ceremony you will briefly describe how you parents met and each year of your child's life as they circle a ceremonial sun.

If you like, send in a picture board with 1 photo for each year of your child's life to be used during the ceremony. We also appreciate any printed out or digital photos.

Clothing: Send in several changes of labeled clothing. We ask that children wear loose, comfortable, easy-to-manage play clothes; elastic waists and pull ons are best.

Avoid overalls, headbands, belts, jewelry, make up, tattoos, nail polish, dress shoes, shoes with heels, light up clothes and shoes or cowboy boots. Avoid licensed media clothing.

Send sensible shoes that your child can put on and off alone. Choose clothes that can be used freely in paint, sand, water, etc. Although supposedly washable many of our art supplies do stain.

We encourage your children to fully experience their time here; they will go home dirty.

Girls in dresses wear shorts, leggings, tights or pants underneath to encourage freedom of movement.

Children wear their hair off their faces with clips or if longer in braids or pony tails so they can see what they are doing.

During warm weather we do a lot of water play so your child needs to wear a 2 piece swim suit, bottoms and rash guard shirt or regular tee (no one piece suits or bikinis please) a beach towel and water proof sandals/croc type shoes.

During cold weather we wear washable slippers inside. Your child needs rubber boots that stay at school for the winter. Be sure your child has a warm coat with a hood, or a hat and mittens. We go out in light rain, send in proper gear.

Communication & Logs: Each child has a section in a log book at the sign in counter.

You will receive regular emails that include: Our weekly plan and group updates and news. We do regular posts on facebook and instagram highlighting the special day child, person or critter.

Injuries, incidents and health alerts are also emailed. Note any changes or news, including injuries that have left a mark, from home and initial and date the entry in your child's log section.

Daily Schedule: We endeavor to maintain a balance of work time, group activities and outdoor time. We follow the children's energy levels and the seasons. A general schedule can be found on the web site.

Diapers: Send in a good supply of labeled diapers and wipes and swim diapers for the summer swim season. Put them in your child's cubby. Soiled clothing will

be sent home daily in a plastic bag to be found on the front steps. **If still in diapers, a \$40 monthly charge will be added to the tuition until the child is consistently using the toilet.**

Discipline: We use **Mindful Parenting Tips** as developed and taught by Tulum Dothee. Attending one five week **fee** course here at Oakhaven in either **Beginning, Intermediate or Advanced Mindful Parenting, or Personal Growth,** is required by one parent yearly.

Children who are disrespectful or intentionally injure any person, animal or plant are sent home. We have a full disclosure policy whereby all details are disclosed to all concerned parties. **Parents are required to phone other parents with whom their child has been involved in an incident, with follow up discussed, decided and results sent in by note or email to inform staff.** Our discipline policy is included in your enrollment packet.

Under no circumstances is corporal punishment allowed by any teacher or parent during school or any school related event.

Drop off: Help your child feel safe and welcome. Keep a consistent routine with the same person bringing your child to school.

As you leave assure your child that _____ will pick them up. Give one kiss and hug and leave promptly even if they cry.

Children recover quickly once you have left, usually more quickly than the parent.

Show confidence in your child and the new situation. If your child cries we will call/text to reassure you once your child has recovered.

Feel free to call to chat with your child if you had a difficult morning at home.

Emergency Procedures: Our emergency policy is found in your enrollment packet. In the event of an emergency not requiring evacuation, your child will be kept and cared for here at the school.

If evacuated we will notify all the parents and meet at the Twin Cities Church Parking Lot in Grass Valley.

It is essential that you keep your emergency information **COMPLETE** and **UP TO DATE** in the log book.

Every child must have an emergency pack that stays at school (see your enrollment packet).

Enrollment Packet: Must be completed and submitted prior to admission.

Enrollment Procedure. Come visit first without your child. If you like what you see, bring your child and spouse within one week to make sure we are a match.

A non refundable \$75 enrollment fee holds you child's space. Once your enrollment fee is paid you will receive your enrollment packet and the guidelines for new student visits.

You have one week to fill out your packet, return it and set up your child's visits. If you do not return the packet and schedule your child's visits within a week you will lose your child's space.

Family of the Month: Every family has the responsibility to sign up to be the Family of the Month each year.

The purpose is to encourage family interaction to enrich the experience for the entire school community. A sign-up sheet will be posted.

The family of the month:

- brings in 6 - 12 books on the subject being studied. We have a good selection of books here, ask us:-)
- provides relevant decorations, flowers or other items from nature (live or dried) to arrange
- prepares a special snack
- creates hands-on activities to share
- gives a presentation
- serves as the liaison between the school and new parents.

Family Station: The Family Station is found on the sign in counter at the entrance. It includes the daily group notes, sign in and out sheet, sign up sheets, notices and various log books.

Be sure to sign in and out, read the daily group notes and other notices. Notices are sent via email and posted and changed regularly.

Please provide us with a current email address that you check regularly.

Fundraisers: Various fundraisers are held throughout the year.

Grievances: Our goal is to make the Oakhaven Community the best we can. Sometimes we have to make decisions for the welfare of the group as a whole rather than what might be best for any individual child or their family.

We welcome the opportunity to resolve any issues you might have. Here's what you can expect. A 15 minute meeting will be set up with Tulum and at least one other parent volunteer teacher. We focus on problem solving rather than complaints.

Of course we hope to find a satisfactory result for all of us. Sometimes that is not possible and it is in the best interest for all concerned to end our relationship. If at any time any disrespect occurs during the meeting our business is concluded and enrollment of that child is no longer an option.

Holidays: Let's celebrate different culture's festivals. Share yours!

Hours: School Year Drop off: 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. Pick up: 12:00, 2:30, and 4:30 p.m. Summer Camp Drop off: 8:30. Pick up 5:30. Arrive and pick up any time you like!

Illness: We are not licensed to care for ill children. Any child who appears ill on arrival or becomes ill is sent home.

Keep your child at home for at least 24-48 hours after the following symptoms disappear (even if taking antibiotics):

- fever, within 24 hours of 100 oral degrees or higher or taking fever reducing meds.
- rash on the arms, chest, back or neck
- eyes-red, itchy or showing yellow coloring or discharge
- runny nose with green discharge
- mouth sores
- difficulty swallowing
- red inflamed throat
- excessive or bark-like coughing
- congested wheezing
- stomach ache with fever
- vomiting
- diarrhea if more than once in 2 hours
- unusual irritability
- Crying over 30 minutes without being able to be consoled

- extreme sleepiness
- sores on scalp
- lice or nits in hair
- any communicable disease for which your child has no immunity or vaccination

If any symptoms are noticed during the day, your child will be made comfortable and you will be notified to pick up your child ASAP.

Any communicable disease will be posted and emailed along with symptoms. Call to let us know if your child is unwell and staying home for any reason.

Your child may return to school:

- 24 hours after their temperature has returned to normal
- antibiotics have been administered for a full 24 hours (see pinkeye note below)
- symptoms have subsided
- chicken pox sores are completely scabbed over
- all lice and nits removed from hair and scalp
- in the case of communicable diseases, the length of exclusion will be determined by the type of disease and the availability of treatment to be determined by the Nevada County Health Department or Sierra Care Pediatrics.

*Pinkeye: child may return to school 24 hours after symptoms have disappeared; please continue antibiotic drops 48-72 hours after symptoms subside.

Immunizations: Children must have all necessary immunizations and a completed blue card BEFORE being admitted or a medical waiver signed by an M.D. or a D.O.

- If your children are not immunized for any particular illness they must stay home until the illness has passed.
- Update your immunizations with a hard copy print out from your M.D. and on your child's blue immunization record in their log section whenever your child gets any immunizations.

Injury: If injured away from school and evidence remains such as bruises, scabs, scratches etc., notify us AND make a note in your child's log section with details including type of injury and how it occurred. Date and sign entry.

If your child is injured or intentionally injures another child here at school, a report will be completed and placed on the sign in counter. You will receive a call/text or email with details as well. Sign and take the report home.

If your child injures or is disrespectful to someone, his homework is to dictate or write an apology note, sign it and bring it the next day.

- For example:
- "Dear _____,
- I apologize for _____.
- The next time I will do _____ instead.
- To make amends I will do _____ with/for you."

Lunch: Pack it in a soft sided insulated lunch bag with an ice pack and a cloth napkin.

Make lunch with your child. Focus on proteins, whole grains, fresh veggies and fruits. Include one item per year of age of child.

No beverages, other than water or kefir/yogurt drinks, desserts, chips or high sugar items, including yogurt.

Avoid messy foods that are eaten with a fork or spoon. Due to time restraints please don't ask us to heat anything up.

- 3 year olds make lunch with a parent.
- 4 year olds make lunch with some help.
- 5+ year olds make lunch with a parent checking for healthy choices and sufficient quantities.

Medication Policy:

- If at all possible, administer medications at home.
- Only medication prescribed by a doctor may be given.
- Meds must be in original container with the child's full name on the prescription label.
- A medication form must be completed.

Recommended Days Per Week of Attendance:

- Age 2.5: Two or more half days.
- Age 3: Three or more half days.
- Age 3.5: Three or more full days.
- Age 4: Three or more full days.
- Age 5: Four or more full days.

Transitional Kindergarteners: We recommend 4 - 5 full, 9:00 - 2:30, days per week to get the lessons necessary to succeed in kindergarten.

Transitional Kindergarteners, Kindergarteners and home schooled elementary aged children are welcome to attend our enrichment programs and special classes. See the website for more information.

New Student Visits: New student visits are available during the spring and summer. When possible we try to complete student visits before final enrollment. This gives us both time to acclimate you and your child to daily life here at Oakhaven.

Visits are scheduled on the same day once per week for a month. Parents/Care givers stay less and less until your child is ready to be here on their own.

Notify School: Please notify us about changes in your family's or child's life. Significant visits, pregnancies, illnesses, job changes, business trips, vacations, new siblings, affect your child and their demeanor at school. Be sure to call/text or email if your child is going to be absent.

Observations: Every parent is required to make at least one observation of the class in action per year for at least one hour or preferably an entire morning or school day.

We recommend that you come for a half hour before the fall conference and the second half hour before the spring conference. A sign up sheet will be posted.

You are always welcome to come and see how great your children are doing!

Openings: Opening are filled with preference given to continuing year round students and siblings followed by school year students.

The remainder are filled on a first come first served basis in conjunction with the openings available and the schedule needs of the incoming child.

Preferred days cannot be guaranteed. Three days per week schedules must include a Monday or a Friday.

Parent Conferences: Feel free to schedule a phone date or make an appointment at any time.

When relaying information with your child present be sure to include them in the conversation.

Regularly scheduled conferences occur in the fall, winter and spring.

Payments: You pay a yearly tuition divided into prorated monthly installments. Payment for legal holidays is included in your annual tuition.

For year round students installments are paid for 12 months.

For school year students installments are paid for 10 months.

Tuition payments are due and paid in advance on the 1st, and by the 5th or on the 15th, and by the 20th, of each month. When you pay depends on your enrollment date.

Make arrangements if you need a different payment schedule.

Late fees will accrue for each day your payment is late at the rate of \$5 per calendar day, including weekends. Nonpayment by the end of a month will terminate enrollment.

Parking: Enter through the western loop of the driveway and park in a gravel space to the left of the driveway so others can get by. Leave the area directly in front of the house open and free of cars.

Hold your child's hand while in the driveway. Do not allow your child to run out to the front meadow or in the drive way.

Peanut/Nut Allergies: We cannot accommodate any nut allergies.

Personal Belongings: Each school year student has a cubby for their gear.

Visiting or enrichment students and summer campers need to bring their gear in a back pack or tote bag.

Any toys, candy or other miscellaneous items need to stay at home or in the car. If an item finds its way into the classroom it will be put away until dismissal time.

Recommended Reading:

- Scheduling For Success Tulum Dothee: e book ask for a copy
- Positive Discipline For Preschoolers Jane Nelson
- Montessori: A Modern Approach Paula Polk Lillard
- The Absorbent Mind and other works by Maria Montessori
- John Bradshaw On: The Family

Responsibilities of Oakhaven Montessori School:

- Provide an environment that is safe, clean and attractive.
- Maintain standards required by licensing, county and state agencies.
- Provide a program that is stimulating, diverse, developmentally appropriate and our best effort.
- Provide well trained and qualified parent volunteer staff who are exceptional in their capacity for guiding and caring
- Remain committed to professional growth and excellence.

Responsibilities of the Parents:

- Know the contents of the handbook and follow the policies and procedures.
- Daily review of the Group Notes, info on the sign in counter plus Oakhaven emails: weekly plan, and health & misc. notices.
- Attend one Back to school Night: one parent/caretaker per family.
- Parents of Transitional Kindergarten (4 by 9/1) & Kindergarten (5 by 9/1) children attend a TK/K orientation.
- One Five week Fee course in Mindful Parenting or Personal Growth.
- Family of the month: Sign up for one topic per child enrolled:
 - Bring 6 - 12 factual books on the subject.
 - Provide seasonal, relevant items & help decorate the classroom.
 - Do a presentation on your topic with a follow up activity.
 - Or organize a relevant field trip including coordinating drivers.
- Parent Participation Volunteer Hours: Ten Hours (per enrolled child) helping in the classroom, office, or grounds. Plan on 5 hours in the fall, 5 in the spring. Keep track in the parent hours log.
- Three afternoons of pool duty during the swim season. Any uncompleted hours are added to your parent hours. Keep track in the parent hours log.
- Unfulfilled parent or pool hours will be billed at \$10 p/h at the school year end to pay others to do it.
- **Want to help, too busy and have cash? Buy out program: help us pay someone else to do it: \$300 minimum. More gratefully accepted:-)**
- Remember your snack day. If you forget, send in snacks for the snack bin.

- **Classroom Observations:** minimum of one hour per parent for each enrolled child. Do half an hour before the fall conference and the other half before the spring conference. Note observations in the parent hour log.
- **Attend parent-teacher conferences:** one each in fall, winter & spring.
- **Bring and pick up your child on time.** Arrival by 9:00 am is paramount for setting the tone for the day.
- **Promptly fulfill your financial obligation to the school.**
- **Promote the school in the community.**

School Materials: Return any item from school that makes its way into your home. It is probably part of a set and we need it back.

School Statement: We are licensed and regulated by the Department of Social Services:

Community Care Licensing

9835 Goethe Road, Suite 100,
 Sacramento, CA 95827
 Telephone: (916) 263-5744
 E-mail: CCLPSAC@dss.ca.gov

Sharing: Your child's snack day is also their share day and special day to be the decider, helper, server, etc. Your child may share a book, something from nature, a homemade item, a photo, a family story, a science experiment, a cultural activity or food. Toys stay at home please.

Snack: Usually your child will be assigned at least one special/snack day per month. During months when we have breaks your child may not get a special day.

Send healthy, simple, non processed foods from 3 food groups; a protein, vegetable or fruit and a grain. Avoid sugars and preservatives.

We drink only water at all meals and during the day. Include your child in choosing and preparing the snack, let them decide what item to bring to share, if any.

If you miss a snack day, please send in a packaged, nonperishable snack for the snack bin.

Special Needs: All children are special and have their own unique characteristics, needs, strengths and skills. We accept any child whose needs

we can meet without taking away from the needs of the other children, the community and the parent volunteers and teachers. **Nut allergies cannot be accommodated.**

Sun Screen: Every child needs a container of sun screen to stay here at school. Choose very water resistant with at least 4% of zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. Apply before school during sunny weather. We will reapply before pool time in the afternoon.

Telephone/Text Messages: During program hours we will try to answer. If the machine picks up, messages are checked every couple of hours or so.

If you need to get through, use the code: ring twice, hang up and ring again; we will make every effort to pick up.

The best time to get through directly is 7:00- 8:30 am.

We do not answer the phone or return calls in the evening or on weekends unless it is an emergency. If you want to chat after hours, please set up a phone date.

Things to bring:

- slippers: machine washable
- several changes of clothes
- diapers and wipes as needed
- warm weather: swim bottoms and rash guard shirt, (no one pieces or bikinis) swim diapers, beach towel, crocs or flip flops with a back strap, sun hat, sun screen, swim vest for the pool
- cold weather: warm coat with hood or hat, mittens, rubber boots, warm socks, rain coat
- lunch in soft sided insulated bag with an ice pack
- cloth napkin
- Children who stay for the afternoon rest may bring a blanket and/or stuffed animal.
- emergency pack (see emergency policy)

Total Disclosure Policy We have a total disclosure policy in regards to ANY and ALL child, parent, and staff behavior. Our policy includes sharing all school business and interactions with all involved. For example if your child injures or is disrespectful to any person, animal or plant, full details are released to the parties concerned and to the group as a whole to ensure accountability and follow through.

In the case of a parent expressing concerns about any child, parent, staff, or policy it is required that the other parent or staff member remind the sharing parent of our policy, encourage them to contact Tulum, and remind them that the listener will notify Tulum within 24 hours and to expect a follow up call.

Transportation: All children must have a signed transportation release in case of evacuation or any emergency. We also go on field trips and will be requesting your help.

Withdrawals: A one month written notice at the first of the month with your final payment is required to decrease hours, days or withdraw your child.

Welcome to the Oakhaven Community!